

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
FOR THE DISTRICT OF SOUTH CAROLINA  
FLORENCE DIVISION

Gina Lynn Petrone-Knechtel, ) Civil Action No.: 4:16-cv-00764-RBH  
                                  )  
Plaintiff,                    )  
                                  )  
v.                             ) **ORDER**  
                                  )  
Nancy A. Berryhill, Acting )  
Commissioner of the Social )  
Security Administration,    )  
                                  )  
Defendant.                    )  
                                  )  
\_\_\_\_\_

On July 27, 2017, Plaintiff filed a motion for attorney's fees pursuant to the Equal Access to Justice Act,<sup>1</sup> asserting the position taken by Defendant in this action was not substantially justified. *See* ECF No. 32. On August 10, 2017, the parties filed a joint stipulation wherein they agreed to an award of attorney's fees in the amount of \$5,400.00. *See* ECF No. 33. The joint stipulation provides that the attorney's fees awarded should be paid to the claimant (not her attorney) and would be subject to the Treasury Offset Program<sup>2</sup> if the claimant owes an outstanding debt to the federal government. *See id.*

After careful consideration, the Court **ORDERS** Defendant to pay Plaintiff attorney's fees in the amount of \$5,400.00, subject to the Treasury Offset Program provision in the parties' joint stipulation. Pursuant to *Astrue v. Ratliff*, 560 U.S. 586 (2010), the attorney's fees will be paid directly to the claimant and mailed to her attorney, with a copy sent to the claimant.

**IT IS SO ORDERED.**

August 14, 2017

s/ R. Bryan Harwell  
R. Bryan Harwell

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<sup>1</sup> 28 U.S.C. § 2412(d).

<sup>2</sup> 31 U.S.C. § 3716.

Florence, South Carolina

United States District Judge